



# Tales from the Tavern

For Friends of the King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum and Members of the King and Queen County Historical Society

## Spring 2017

### A Keybasket

*As told by Howard Walker to Page McLemore*

Over 100 years ago keybaskets were traditional wedding gifts to aid the new bride in managing the household. These utilitarian baskets were usually made of leather with decorative designs embedded and held keys of all sizes and weights. Exterior doors were seldom kept locked. However, keys were important to secure stored and preserved foodstuff, valuable household items, and even some stock. Thus the china cabinet, linen closet, medicine cabinet, pantry, smoke house, hen house, and maybe the pigpen were locked. Howard Walker, born in 1924 and whose family roots run deep in King and Queen County, lent the family keybasket to the Museum as part of the *Pursuit of Happiness* exhibit when it opened. It was given to his grandmother, Emma Neale Garrett of King William, who passed it on to his mother, Mary Murray Garrett, wife of Ben Walker of Walkerton. Earlier this year the keybasket was returned to the Walker family. Visitors to the Tavern can view a photograph of the basket with an array of antique keys. The King and Queen County Historical Society thanks the Walker family for allowing such an interesting artifact to be part of a Museum exhibit for over 15 years.

### Historical Society Meeting

The King and Queen County Historical Society held its Second Quarter meeting on Sunday April 23, 2017. A new Board of Directors was elected for the period 2017-2019.

President: John Spain

Treasurer: Pat McLemore

Recording Sec.: Biddie Shelor

Corresponding Sec. (Membership & Publications): Page McLemore

Director (Museum Council Chair):

Nancy Herman-Thompson

Director (Past President & Lewis

Cemetery Chair): Dr. A.W. Lewis,

Director (Scholarship Chair): Nora

Walker

Directors:

Brownie Bevan Cynthia Carter

Peter Glubiak Richard Rumrill

Anne Ryland Jamie Ryland

Ms. Carol Lowry gave a talk on

"The Civil War in King & Queen

County." Ms. Lowry has taught

in King & Queen County

schools for many years and is

currently teaching at King &

Queen Elementary School. She

lives at historic Mount Elba,

the home built in 1809 by her

great-great grandfather,

Temple Walker. She is a 10<sup>th</sup>

generation direct descendant

of Major Thomas Walker who

in 1665 patented the land upon

which Fort Mattaponi stood

and later upon which Locust

Grove and Mount Elba were

built. Against the national and

state Civil War backdrop, she

incorporated county history,

and family artifacts and stories,

to provide a picture of the Civil

War from a local perspective.

During her presentation she

shared much of the material

that she uses to teach the Civil

War to county elementary

students.

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*Contributors: Page McLemore, Howard*

*Walker, Alice Sheley, Carol Lowry, Jen*

*Shelor*

*Editor: Biddie Shelor*

### Announcement from the King William County Historical Society

The King William County Museum recently opened its new exhibit, "Out Of The Shadows" which highlights numerous King William County women who contributed to the greater good of their community. There is a wall of many women as well as three distinct exhibits that highlight India Hamilton, Queen Cockacoeske, and Evelina Gregory Roane. Please visit the Museum and learn of the diverse history of these King William County women. Their history is as relevant now as it was years ago. The Museum is located at 227 Horse Landing Road, King William, VA 23086. Hours are Saturday and Sunday 1-5pm.

In an effort to promote other local museums, this newsletter will include announcements that may be of interest to our members.



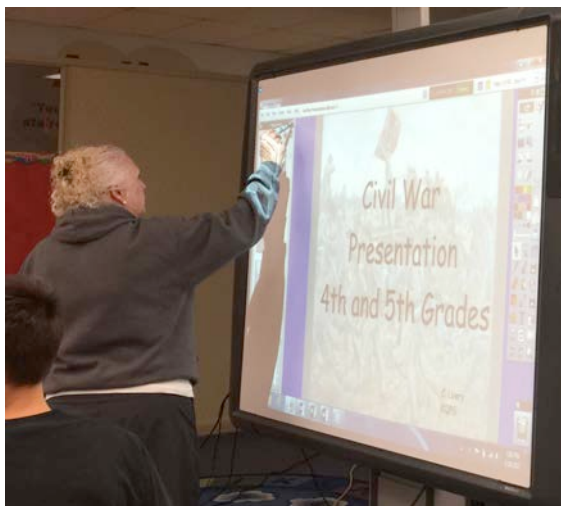
Walker Keybasket  
Photo by Jen Shelor

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[www.kingandqueenmuseum.com](http://www.kingandqueenmuseum.com)

## Tavern Museum Promotes Learning For All Ages

Spring 2017 brought with it six occasions for the Tavern Museum to provide support for educational opportunities for students and those adults who are life long learners. The Tavern Museum sponsored a presentation of the Civil War from a local perspective by Ms. Carol Lowry to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes at Lawson-Marriott Elementary and King & Queen Elementary on March 20 and 21 respectively. After providing overall background, she made the era come alive using accounts of local events, family artifacts, period clothing, toys, and music. A custom visit for first grade students was provided on March 24 to the Lawson-Marriott class in the morning and the King & Queen Elementary class in the afternoon that covered a tour of the Museum, schoolhouse, and post office/carriage house with hands-on demonstrations of “old fashion” clothes washing and drying, writing with a quill pen, and spinning yarn from wool. On April 6 Council member Newell Randall gave a presentation on fossils in King and Queen County to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades at King & Queen Elementary School, an introduction to the fossil exhibit that he is creating for the Museum. The Museum Council worked with the organizers of the Rappahannock Institute of Lifelong Learning (RILL) course “The Fascinating History of King & Queen County: Churches, Historic Homes, and More” to provide information and access to venues as well as docents for the tour of the Museum and Historic Courthouse Green. The course was attended by approximately 25 individuals and included 3 two-hour classes on separate days visiting historic places within the county: March 30 (the Museum and Historic Courthouse Green), April 13 (Mount Elba and Mizpah Church), April 20 (Mattaponi Church and Old Church).



Ms. Lowry begins.



Civil War period clothes are a big hit.



### IN APPRECIATION

A thank you to Ms. Carol Lowry for her very active support during a 4-week period in the second quarter of 2017. She gave a Courthouse Tavern sponsored Civil War presentation to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Lawson-Marriott Elementary on March 20 and to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade at King & Queen Elementary on March 21. On very short notice she also provided a tour of her historic home Mount Elba for the RILL Class on King and Queen County History on April 13 and presented the program for the Second Quarter Historical Society meeting on April 23.

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Ellen White guides students through the Tavern Museum.



Newell Randall stirs interest in fossils.  
Photo by Carol Lowry



School mistress Linda Barnes welcomes students.



Postmaster Frank Hurst introduces the post office in the country store.



To the far left Susan Richardson shows students how clothes washing was done before automatic washing machines.

To the near left Dr. A. W. Lewis shows students how wool is spun into yarn.

Photos by Alice Sheley

# *Tales from the Tavern*

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## **Then and Now - the Clothespin**

Most clothes washed today are usually dried in an electric or gas dryer with many setting options. Before the advent of the clothes dryer, clothes were initially flung over bushes or lines to dry. The wooden clothes peg was invented in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and used to hang wet laundry on a line. It was made from one piece of wood, with two prongs that were wedged apart to hold the material hung across a line. The spring loaded variety came later that century and both are commonly called "the clothespin." The wooden "springless" variety is today more likely to be used for crafts such as stick dolls for decorations. When the first grade children visited the Museum many of them, and some of their chaperons, had never seen the modest wooden clothespeg (clothespin). The students participated in a demonstration of its use.



King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum  
PO Box 129  
King and Queen C.H., VA 23085-0129

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